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REV. DR. S. E. BISHOP DISCUSSES MIRACLES

tors was well attended yesterday. Rev. Dr. S. E. Bishop's paper presented be-"Pit is the most exciting of all low was discussed with great approval.

CREDIBILITY OF MIRACLES.

God's Revelations of himself as recorded in our Holy Scriptures, are inextricably associated with miracles. This is true both of the Old Testament revelations and of the later ones given through the Lord Jesus and his apostles. Hence the main effort of the opposers of Christianity is diverted toward discrediting the reality and even the possibility of miracles. Their main contention is that miracles are such subversions of natural law that therefore a priori incredible.

As a corollary of this conclusion it follows that all writings alleging miraculous occurrences are to be discredited. Since miracles are necessarily impossible, such writings asserting their performance cannot possibly Q be the authentic work of honest eye- o witnesses. Thus the genuineness and authenticity of the whole of our Bible is at once disproved, and the work of O those higher critics who accept this principle is reduced to the task of accounting in detail for the existence Q of those miracle-recording books and | for their early acceptance by the Israelite and Christian churches.

Adopting as their fundamental canon that miracles are impossible and incredible, the work of destroying the credibility of the historical books of the Bible is pursued with the greatest Candy Company's Candy, makes the industry and ingenuity by the very large and able class of what are known as the "Destructive" Higher Critics. In pursuing this work they indulge in unlimited conjecture, which with the utmost conviction they put forward as valid reasoning. Of course, if miracles are absolutely incredible, it is merely necessary by ingenious conjectures to show how such miracles as the histories assert might easily have come to be believed. One conjecture is as good as another to prove the mere pos- O sibility of erroneous testimony.

It is merely necessary for us to understand that the real basis under- C lying all the argument of these destructive critics is the absurdity of believing in any Divine revelation which is accompanied by the alleged miracles. From this sole groundwork proceeds all the ingeniuty used in showing that the writers of the Gospels and the Acts C were not contemporary with the events therein narrated, but were later compilers of traditional reports, so that their testimony to the fact of the miracles is destitute of value. And the same may be said of the destructive Q criticism of the Old Testament by which the whole of Genesis and the

aginative books.

British monthly.

used the following language with great science to dictate any opinion on that step by step undermined the fundamental assumptions of theology. It is now almost an axiom that a miracle never did take place, and never will Even if there is a God, He is not above His laws in nature. * * It is now even possible to trace back men and animals to a common ancestor, and it is accordingly just as rational to claim immortality for the latter as for the former. * * Mankind can only progress by setting aside all ideas of the supernatural. * * Just in proportion as men give up faith in the beyond will they labor for the good things of this earth. It is this aspect of things that awakens the feeling of fraternal love and cooperation among men, as is seen by the phenomenal blessings that resulted from the French Revolution. The key note of modern thought must be the realization of the highest good that the earth affords."

These rantings were greeted by vigorous applause and no protests, although written protests afterwards appeared from various sources. The whole illustrates the increasing acceptance of the opinion that Science has proved the untruth of miracles and of revelation. In view of the great prevalence of such false teaching among schools of science, it seems needful for Christian teachers to get their reasoning will necessarily be philoso- that an apparently fixed position of minds especially clear as to the facts phic, and not scientific. Science can- the sun and moon might have been involved.

such ideas as lie in the writer's mind upon the subject of Miracles, probably without adding new information or perhaps any fresh form of thinking to our current convictions upon the questions involved. But it may be whole- a very forcible line of metaphysical laws of light by interposing a suitable some for us to compare thought thereon, in the face of an increasing current of unbelief in God's Word.

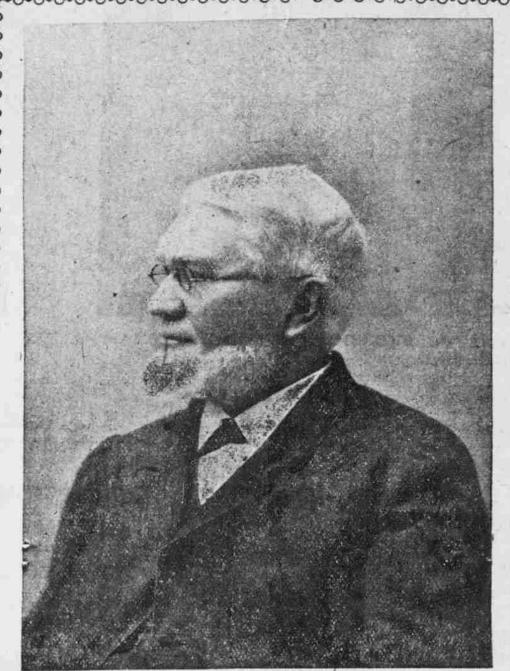
SCIENCE AND MIRACLES.

Expert cutter, formerly with J. D. Cleaning and repairing any scientific facts. By science I conclusion may be correct. But it is imparted to their living bodies as to mean the knowledge of the laws and not at all a scientific deduction. It emanate an aura enveloping them and enjoy We.

The fortnightly meeting of local pas- order of materia? nature, knowledge which has enormously developed during the past century. Knowledge of creased to a vast extent. To these is added an extended knowledge of and their remedies.

is purely metaphysical reasoning, and not a teaching of science, and the conclusion might be arrived at by persons extremely ignorant of natural laws. No completeness of scientific exploration of the laws of the material universe can possibly avail to prove or disprove the Creator's ability or disposition to alter or subvert any of those laws. To assert any such conclusion in the name of science is very shallow presumption.

For one I am so much impressed by the universality and complete order of the system of natural law of which so much is known, as to feel that there is those natural laws, such as gravitation, much plausibility in the contention chemical and electric forces, molecu- that the Creator will hold those laws lar constitution of matter, has been in- immutable, and will never change or subvert them. And here is the most important distinction to be observed in living organisms and their structure and defining the nature of a miracle, a multitude of the conditions of their Miracles probably never involve any changes and growth. There is also a violation of natural law. Miracles convastly enlarged understanding of the sist in the manifestation of such perstellar universe and the laws of its sonal force acting upon Nature as to constitution and development. So also evince the presence and action of a with the structure of the human body supernatural being producing effects and its intricate conditions of disease which could not otherwise take place, but without any subversion or viola-But all these vast and intricate dis- | tion of natural laws. It is simply the



REV. DR. S. E. BISHOP.

history of Abraham and the patriarchs, coveries of the laws of the material direct interposition of such personal as well as most of the later history of world which are embraced in Natural supernatural force as to produce re-Israel is relegated to the class of im- Science do not and cannot have one sults or effects manifestly different word to dictate to our minds as to from what unaided natural forces could The attitude on the subject of mira- what the Creator may or may not do have produced. sumed in our current literature is illus- of those laws or even to subvert them. the familiar effects upon matter prolast October by Walter R. Cassels, another distinct sphere of thoughtwhere he dictatorially declares, "It is not to science but to philosophy which been completely discredited. * * The outside of the sphere of matter-with central dogmas of the Church, which the intangible, not the tangible and are in themselves miraculous are sensible When a Ladenberg predwindling away through the same proc- sumes to assert that "even if there be ess of disintegration." This of course a God, He is not above His laws in refers to the great central miracles Nature," he is simply wandering outof the incarnation and the resurrec- side of the proper sphere of science tion of our Lord. It is implied that no which is concerned with defining the enlightened thinker can any longer laws found to exist in nature, and attach weight to these miracles, and cannot possibly have anything to say this is calmly asserted in a leading about the laws governing the conduct of the Creator. Any reasoning about A leading German professor, Laden- His conduct belongs to another sphere, berg, in a recent address as president and is wholly outside the jurisdiction

> A not unnatural source of confusion the fact that the development of scientific knowledge has relegated many preme Creator of all can do the same supposed supernatural incidents to the sphere of natural law. An instance is that of thunder, which used to be ural incident. So with a multitude of subversion of existing forces. diseases once supposed to be caused by supernatural agencies, but now traced to specific natural causes. Thus because a great variety of fancied supernatural effects have been eliminated by science, the false and rash conclusion has been adopted that the existence of all supernatural action has been disproved.

produce a different result from what again when it resumed its rotation. would have come to pass without His Now while I would not deem it necof scientific discovery.

THE METAPHYSICAL SIDE.

reasoning which claims that the Cre- medium to refract or reflect them.

cles and revelation now openly as- as to interposing to affect the action | This thought may be illustrated by operation of physical forces? trated in the Nineteenth Century of All that kind of discussion belongs to duced by voluntary human action. definition of the miracle, it is not in-When you see a piece of iron held upon the surface of water by the visible supnot too much to say that miracles have deals with abstract reasoning lying port of a human hand there is no mar- laws which He has ordained for the vel. But if Elisha's pupil drops his ongoing of the worlds. But there is in Claus Spreckels....First Vice-President axehead into a river, and it floats upon our minds a natural reluctance to at- W. M. Giffard...Second Vice-President the surface, it is called a miracle, be- tribute to Him that sort of mutability, ing hand which obstructs the action of for the manifestation of His personal Sugar Factors and Commission Agents gravity is seen, while in the latter the presence and power. What is known supporting agency is an invisible one, as the "law of parsimony" seems to apparently supernatural, manifesting invite us to avoid so violent a hypo- Oceanic Steamship Company the presence and power of God or his thesis as the subversion or suspension angel. In neither case is the law of gravitation subverted or violated. In both cases the action of gravity is simply obstructed by a personal force.

It is certainly competent for us to credit the doctrine that the Universe of the National Society of Naturalists, of science. It is mere presumption for contains a multitude of invisible personal agents, capable of acting upon the forces of matter just as we human personal agents do, only with greater In men's thinking on this point, is in power and skill. And it is equally competent for us to believe that the Suthing with unlimited power and skill, without at all violating the laws of matter. In all such modifications of thought a supernatural voice of God, the effects produced, there is simply a physically healing forces, and forces but is now known to be a purely nat- new personal force interposed, and no

BIBLE MIRACLES.

In farther illustration of this character of miracles, let us; adduce some of the most remarkable miracles recorded in the Bible. Perhaps no miracle is more apparently subversive of great physical laws than that of the arrest of the motions of the sun and moon by Joshua. At It may be true that no God exists. first thought this miracle seems to in-But it is not within the sphere of volve an absolute stoppage of the revoscience to prove such a thing. From lution of the earth upon its axis, the the vast and ordered system of laws effect of which would naturally be to revealed by science, philosophy may shoot violently into space not only well infer the activity of a wise and everything on the surface of the globe perfect creator. It may also be true but everything in its interior. Such efthat the Creator is necessarily debar- fect would seem avoidable only by a red from subverting any laws of mat- complete subversion of the law of inter which He has ordered, or even from ertia so as to hold everything in place personally interposing in any way to while the globe stopped rotating, and

interposition. It may be possible essary to insist upon this miracie of plausibly to support such contentions Joshua as a genuine historical record, by philosophical reasoning. But the it may be quite in place to point out not possibly meddle with such ques- secured for a short time without any It is under the temporary incentive tions, without ceasing to be science, such violent interference with the laws of such hostile utterances that the And the conclusions to be arrived at of matter. It simply needed that the present essay is composed, embodying must remain unaffected by any amount rays of those luminaries should be so deflected by refraction or reflection as to make them apparently retain the same position. Such bending of their Leaving then science to its own ex- rays could be produced by the Divine tensive and entrancing sphere, we find hand entirely in accordance with the

ator is under a mental and moral ne- Or take again the recorded marvel of cessity to maintain intact the laws of the Hebrew children unconsumed in the Universe which He has established the furnace. We need not suppose any It is not to be conceived that He would subversion of the laws of heat, but only with Chamberlain's Cough Remedy. It The main point which I am inclined in any case, or for any reason what- such a supernatural reinforcement of always cures and cures quickly. Bento emphasize is that denial of mira- ever, change or subvert those laws the vital forces of the three persons son, Smith & Co., Ltd., Wholesale cles is not in the least degree a con- even for a single instant. Like Him- as to resist and neutralize the effects Agents, sell it. Expert cutter, formerly with J. D clusion of science or an inference from self those laws are immutable. This of heat, We may suppose such power

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serve to be recommended." Mr. Stevens is one of our own citizens. Is not such testimony stronger than that of someone living in the

a good remedy for backache and de-

States? Doan's Backache Kidney Pills are sold by all chemists and store keepers at 50 cents per box, six boxes \$2.50, or will be mailed on receipt of price by

the Hollister Drug Co., Honolulu, wholesale agents for the Hawaiian

counteracting the power of heat to consume. That would be an added force, not a subversion of exciting force. The unaided body can do much in resisting heat and cold. The Divine power only needs to intensify existing forces, not to subvert any law of matter.

Another illustration may be taken from the miracle of the loaves and fishes. In the miraculous multiplication of the food, strangely growing in quantity while being distributed, no subversion or violation of existing laws is implied. It is only that new forces are temporarily supplied to gather from earth and air the needed material substances and combine them into the newly formed food. A similar combination is effected by natural law in the ordinary growing of grain or of flesh. O In the miracle a corresponding growth was produced by the Divine power emanating from the Christ of God. No law was subverted. Fresh force was superadded.

It seems entirely in accord with reason to attribute to the Creator and Giver of Life all extraordinary power that may be required to accomplish an one of the miracles on record without in the least violating or subverting any one of the established laws of material nature. Healing the sick, raising the dead, restoring maimed limbs, need be only a reinforcing or adding to natural processes. Is it not therefore competent for us entirely to dispense with any definition of a miracle as a "Violation or subversion of natural law?" May we not understand a miracle to be merely the interposition of divine power to produce effects not attainable by mere natural law, or the ordinary

In suggesting this limitation in our tended to call in question the power of the Creator to suspend or change the of natural law. In the most important and emphatic

sense, such exercise of peculiar supernatural power in miracles seems to appropriately attend the presence and personal activity of a divine being. Such a Being as was The Christ during His Messianic activity, moved among men, flooded and surcharged, as it were, with divine power. It was power both spiritual and physical Such power poured forth from Him. He was a fountain of divine forces, Wherever He went He radiated spiritual force to turn dying hearts to God and heavenly life, and He emanated controlling matter. He laid the stormin winds and waves to rest. He marshalled the organic forces of matter into food. He cowed and stilled the frenzy of wild demons. All these wonderful powers were appropriate manifestations of God manifest in the flesh. And in like manner, whenever Jeho-

vah the Living God of the Old Testament manifested Himself among men, displays of supernatural power seem to have been wholly appropriate and natural. The burning bush, the fiery pillar, the rocking, flaming Sinai, the daily manna, all were natural manifestations of the divine presence. Jehovah God was visiting His people. A divine revelation unattended by ural and unsuitable. Where God retions of His personal presence must be the appropriate and the expected. Our

miraculous manifestations of supernatural power would seem to be unnatveals himself the mighty manifestadivine religion emanating directly from the real, personal, almighty God, is therefore necessarily a revelation attended by miracles. They are not merely signs of the divine presence, but spontaneous and inseparably attendant on that presence, as sparks are to a live wire.

Not only then are miracles credible, but divine revelation unattended by miracles would be incredible.

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